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House of Representatives

The House met at 2 p.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Lord God, strong to save, on Super Bowl Sunday as Americans settled in to watch the annual spectacle of a football game, the face of the Nation was mirrored on our television screens and projected across the world just as it began.

Was America the Beautiful ever rendered more beautiful than when a host of blind students was witnessed singing and signing for a deaf world?

Our national anthem followed, sung by a combined choir formed of the various branches of America's military forces held in high-range restraint. Here, Lord, was vulnerability and strength. Here honesty, bravery, and grace were brought together in harmony. Justice and mercy embraced before the silent millions and You, our God, were glorified in our humanity.

May the strains of America's moving song penetrate this Chamber, guide this session of Congress, and bring into focus the voice of the future and invite the participation of all in the work of democracy. For You are our hope and salvation, now and forever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. SOLIS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

BORDER SECURITY IS HOMELAND SECURITY

(Mr. DELAY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, border security is homeland security. It is odd we even need reminding about that fact especially after 9/11. But just as homeland security is national security, so border security is homeland security. It is really simple, Mr. Speaker. There are violent men who wish to commit atrocities against innocent Americans; and most of them, not all, but most of them come from outside the United States. The 19 men who hijacked commercial passenger planes on September 11, 2001, to fly them into American buildings to perpetrate mass murder exploited our porous borders and ultimately succeeded in their mission of evil.

Since that time, we have made numerous reforms to numerous programs and agencies and systems to prevent such exploitation and such treachery from ever again bloodying our soil.

But, Mr. Speaker, the job is not done. The job is not near done. The holes that remain in our border security systems are not small; they are gaping. And they are glaring to our terrorist enemies. They are coming for us, Mr. Speaker, and politics will not stop them. What will?

Last year, Congress asked the bipartisan 9/11 Commission that very question, and here is what they said in their report: "The Federal Government," the report reads, on page 390, "should set standards for the issuances of birth certificates and sources of identification such as driver's licenses."

Fraud in identification documents is no longer just a problem of theft. The

Federal Government should restrict terrorists' freedom of movement because without it, we learn on page 65, "terrorists cannot plan, conduct surveillance, hold meetings, train for their mission, or execute an attack."

"Today more than 9 million people are in the United States outside the legal immigration system," we read on page 390.

"Once in the United States," the commission says on page 49, "terrorists tried to get legal immigration status that would permit them to stay here, primarily by committing serial, or repeated, immigration fraud by claiming political asylum. Immigration cases against suspected terrorists are often mired for years in bureaucratic struggles over alien rights and the adequacy of evidence."

"There is also evidence," we learn on page 64, "that terrorists used human smugglers to sneak across borders."

In other words, Mr. Speaker, there are gaping holes in our border security system that, 3 years after 9/11, still remain untouched by any reform. This week, the House will finally consider the kind of reforms our border security system desperately needs, reforms called for in the 9/11 Commission's report, reforms American families demand and deserve.

Border security is homeland security, and this week we will begin the process of saying so in the law.

VETERANS AFFAIRS BUDGET

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise concerning the budget cuts President Bush has proposed on the Department of Veterans Affairs. It is nothing more than a smoke screen to make the overall budget numbers look better while veterans are going to have to shoulder

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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H355

most of those costs. The budget makes veterans pay \$250 to enroll in health services and doubles their copayments for prescription drugs, changes which will affect more than 2 million veterans. It makes veterans wait longer for claims to be processed, delaying very vital medical services. It provides a dismal 1.7 percent increase in funding, far from the 14 percent the Veterans Affairs Department really needs to sustain its current services.

President Bush's budget also forgets about the new veterans serving abroad. Over 1,400 have been killed, 11,000 injured, and 10 in my district alone have been killed. These military families are struggling right now. They lack mental health care and other needed services such as bilingual services. They also lack burial funds. Let us keep our commitment and not cut back the budget.

NEVER GIVE UP

(Mr. COBLE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, last week in Ashland, Virginia, Randolph Macon College hosted Guilford College for a collegiate basketball game. With the game tied in overtime and six-tenths of a second remaining, a Randolph Macon player was awarded two free throws. He converted his first one and intentionally missed the second, concluding that time did not permit Guilford to make a play.

Normally, that would have been sound strategy, but Guilford's Jordan Snipes grabbed the rebound and desperately heaved the ball the length of the court. Nothing but net and Guilford won on the shot seen around the world.

The moral of the story: whether in athletics or in life, even with the odds overwhelmingly stacked against you, do not quit. Do not give up, there is always a chance, even though remote, to prevail.

2006 BUDGET IS FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I commend President Bush for proposing a fiscally responsible budget that will rein in Federal spending and protect our top priorities, such as national defense, homeland security, and job creation.

While we may have some differences of opinion on a few of the details, I believe the President's budget is a good first step in the right direction. I am encouraged that he wants to hold Federal programs to a firm test of accountability and eliminate programs that no longer serve their intended purpose or perform a vital function. This action alone will save over \$20 billion in 2006.

The President's proposed budget will also save an additional \$137 billion in spending during the next 10 years. I look forward to working with the President and Congress to craft a budget that will cut our Federal budget in half by 2009 and improve our economy.

PELL GRANTS

(Mr. KELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in favor of a part of President Bush's budget that receives no fanfare or publicity, and that is Pell grants.

Pell grants are dollars we give to children from low- and moderate-income families to help them go to college. I personally would not have been able to go to college without Pell grants, and I serve as chairman of the Congressional Pell Grant Caucus.

When I was elected to Congress in 2000, I made increasing Pell grant funding my top priority, and with this budget, President Bush has done his part, too.

Looking at this chart, let us compare the funding situation in 2000 to the new budget proposal. Overall funding has increased 137 percent. Maximum Pell grant awards are up from \$3,300 to \$4,150, and an additional 1.6 million students are now able to go to college.

Mr. Speaker, Pell grants are truly the passport out of poverty for so many worthy young people, and I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this budget.

HELPING THE IRAQI PEOPLE

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the International Relations Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigation is scheduled to review the Volcker Interim Report on the United Nations Oil-For-Food Program. I would like to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER), the subcommittee chairman, for their leadership on this important issue.

While the United States prides itself as being "the premier vehicle for furthering development in poorer countries," its Oil-For-Food Program allegedly furthered Saddam Hussein's dictatorship over the Iraqi people. During my travels to Iraq, I have seen the numerous palaces of Saddam Hussein and the devastation his rule left on the people of Iraq.

I am outraged to think a U.N.-sponsored program designed to help the Iraqi people was so easily corrupted and manipulated to serve the dictatorship's interests. The diverted funds should be recovered for the people of Iraq.

I strongly support the legislation offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) entitled United Nations Oil-for-Food Accountability Act. This legislation would require the United States to withhold a portion of its U.N. contributions until the U.N. fully cooperates with the Oil-for-Food investigation. American taxpayer dollars should not support programs or people who obstruct our efforts to promote democracy and spread freedom throughout the world.

In conclusion, may God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEARNS) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 7, 2005.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on February 7, 2005 at 1 p.m. and said to contain a message from the President whereby he transmits the Budget of the United States Government for Fiscal Year 2006 (copy enclosed).

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAH, L,
Clerk of the House.

Attachment.

FISCAL YEAR 2006 BUDGET OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 109-2)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, without objection, referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered printed: THE BUDGET MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT

Over the previous four years, we have acted to restore economic growth, win the War on Terror, protect the homeland, improve our schools, rally the armies of compassion, and promote ownership. The 2006 Budget will help America continue to meet these goals. In order to sustain our economic expansion, we must continue pro-growth policies and enforce even greater spending restraint across the Federal Government. By holding Federal programs to a firm test of accountability and focusing our resources on top priorities, we are taking the steps necessary to achieve our deficit reduction goals.

Our Nation's most critical challenge since September 11, 2001, has been to protect the American people by fighting and winning the War on Terror.